

BECAUSE I HATE YOU: a note from the editor

Welcome to the second issue of VOICES WAKE US...When I realized that no one cared what I think about what is or is not punk, it became apparent that I would have to include record reviews and band interviews to satiate my ever-shrinking readership. So this issue features an interview with Mark McCoy of THE OATH, and reviews of all the records I have bought which came out since January 2002. Something to look forward to in the next issue (hopefully available in September): interview with TEAR IT UP, a SAMHAIN discography, and probably something about why emo sucks. (Hopefully emo will be dead by then). My real goal is to find the NEXT crappy trend in p-rock and start making fun of it while it is in its nascency. The way I see it, we had ska...then there was pop punk...now there is emo. What next? I predict it will involve some band who can find a way to take the ORCHID/LOCUST/AN ALBATROSS sound and make it palatable to the radio/MTV2 audience. It will happen, and I know lots of kids will fall for whatever band does this first. Posers.

-Ben.



FACEDOWNINSHIT (Crimes Against Humanity, \$8 ppd) CD

If I didn't know better, I'd assume this band was from Portland. That is a good thing, of course, as they definitely take after the epic crust sound made popular by Portlandians REMAINS OF THE DAY. The first song is 8:23 long, so it is clear that they are giving these songs room to breathe. Unfortunately they do not take advantage of the extended length by adding GUNS 'n ROSES-type guitar solos, which are much needed, even *begged for*. The lyrics are better than average and are angry without being stupid (something you'd never guess from the band name). The album art is pretty horrible, but I know ya'll just care about the tunes, so let's get to it: this is more hardcore than crust, musically, but is lacking in hooks. The riffs are very REMAINS OF THE DAY, but the vocals are not as energetic. There is a considerable amount of variety within and between these songs, and that keeps it *fairly* interesting over the 70-minute listen. I really wish there were more guitar solos, but if you are into this sort of thing, it certainly has a LOT of it for the money you pay (1 10", an LP, and a 7", I believe.) They should totally get Slash for their next album, and remember that "ambient" tracks are for black metal only. B

...OF DEATH "Winter Demo 2001" CD-R.

In 1812 there was Beethoven. In 1957 there was Elvis, and in 2001 ...OF DEATH achieved the next evolution of music: pig-core. This demo only has 3 songs, but I am convinced it will change your life forever. Hailing from Fort Worth, these kids put out vicious emo-grind-chaos with the most radical vocals since Lee Dorrian, and excellent songwriting. I don't know if they think they are a joke, but really this band is one of a kind and super fun. Check this out if you are tired of/want to kill THE LOCUST. No. Get this anyways. (By the way, I have no idea how to get this. Check for their website somewhere on www.dallashardcore.com). A+++

V/A- Murderous Grind Attack (625 Thrashcore)

Hey, I like grind. A lot. More than people should. This comp is full of speedy grind attacks from your fave bands HE WHO CORRUPTS (6 songs), UNHOLY GRAVE (3), BATHTUB SHITTER (3), PHOBIA (2) who are probably the best band on here, GODSTOMPER (2), and many more. This is the type of grindcore where people make weird throat noises and burp a lot. And there are 53 songs total, so the length is sort of an issue.

The other issue is that all these bands sound the same. Duh. Which is why you had better be *really* into one of the above bands if you buy this. And if you are really into one of them, I can't imagine you *not* liking the other bands. Me, I am not into this type of grind as much as I like the metal type of grind (BENUMB, NASUM, CARCASS, Relapse type stuff), but this is a good listen and a good introduction to DIY Grindcore for you kids who called CHARLES BRONSON grindcore and then I lectured you about how stupid you were. By the way, most of these bands have horrible lyrics. B-

Thank to 625 and Crimes Against Humanity for promos. I have tried to not just throw BAND NAMES around. If you get bored, you can just look at the lettered grade. -Ben

HIGHSCORE "Discography" (625) CD

This is fast youth crew from Germany, and it has samples from the classic film "Night at the Roxbury." I can't say I don't enjoy this, but I really don't see myself reaching for this cd that often, as it is rather generic. Nothing here that HOLDING ON has not done better. This also runs for nearly an hour, so it is kind of a tiresome listen. The lyrics here are nothing very original, but at least they are in English if you want to sing along. The breakdowns are adequate but not mind-blowing, which is kinda like the whole cd...adequate. I bet if this band was American and out right now, they would be the kings of whatever town in Oklahoma they were from. It's a shame that I can't really remember any individual song after 3 or so listens. This was better when it was called (every band from 1988). C+

TRAGEDY- "Can We Call this Life?" 7" (Tragedy Records)

This is one of the great all-time bands, even after just two records. There are only three songs on this EP, but they are probably the pinnacle of this sort of melodic crust that Todd and Paul have been working in ever since HIS HERO IS GONE. There is great emotion in these songs, which inspire without being strictly topical. The lyrics for this band are consistently devastating because you get the feeling that the band members actually *think* about these things, instead of just "Oh, I've gotta write some lyrics now...hmm, I don't like war..." Stylistically, if I had to make a comparison, the songs are mainly in the style of "The Unbearable Weight" from the LP. The music and vocals are beyond belief, in the crushing "Portland" style, but with a BLACK SABBATH-like dedication to song-craft and musical vision that is not common among p-bands. These are not songs you can just forget...This ranks up there with *Nervous Breakdown* or *Paranoid*, and if you liked the TRAGEDY LP, this is even better. A classic. A+

SCHOLASTIC DETH- "Revenge of the Nerds" 7" (625)

This is fun retro skate-thrash, with excellent songs true to that style. Seven songs in about as many minutes, but it does not sound like a blur, and is recorded really well. I'd compare it to GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, especially the dude's voice, which is high and sharp. Short, hook-filled tunes about reading, skating, and scene-politics...nothing life-changing, and the essays are waaay more informative than the actual lyrics. I think this has the dude from SPAZZ, but does not suck like that band. This is a great EP, so if you like this style or bands like DS 13 or TEAR IT UP, you might want to get this, so you can know what the fuss is about. A

RAMBO- Wall of Death the System LP/CD (625 Thrashcore)

RAMBO from Philly plays CHAIN OF STRENGTH-type punk with a thrashier edge and with anarcho-political lyrics. These songs are hard-hitting, catchy, and full of circle-pit inducing breakdowns. The cd version contains live footage of a show they did in Philly, and I have to say this band is a must-see for their comical and innovative approach to involving the crowd. This is certainly a political band, but in a way that is funny and clever instead of just sloganeering. This is one of the better releases of the year, so grab a copy. Highest recommendation. A-

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Rap Metal Hall of Fame:

The Real Thing by FAITH NO MORE



No, it's not punk. Back off. I take enough crap already for liking DANZIG solo stuff, so I've heard it all before. But I don't care. FAITH NO MORE rules. And while later works would also have great songs and be more musically varied, I have yet to hear evidence of anything holistically better than their 1989 release *The Real Thing*. In fact, this is not even the "cool" choice of a FNM album to like (that would be the follow-up *Angel Dust*), but I've listened to this a ton of times and it never gets old. So let's get to it. This is the first installment of my *Mook Hall of Fame* for Rap-Metal classics.

The first time I heard FNM was while watching re-runs of Saturday Night Live on VH1 and I saw the classic performances of "Epic" and "From Out of Nowhere," where it appears that Mike Patton has escaped from a circus and wandered onstage in the midst of an acid trip (this is a good thing). So they started playing stupid rap-junk and I was about to flip the channel when suddenly this peppermint-striped 'tard unleashed the most amazing melody from his throat, all the while maintaining one of several stupid facial expressions and sporting an unfortunate ponytail ("we shave under"). The song went on for a bit and during the (rather weak) guitar solo, Mike

own generic nature. The lyrics are bad, the vocals are redundant by their very existence, and even the breakdowns are boring. The band doesn't sound interested in what they are playing, and you won't be, either. Please don't buy this. D

IMMORTAL-"Sons of Northern Darkness" CD (Nuclear Blast)

This band has taken crap for not being "true" black metal anymore, which is only an issue because of the excellence of their albums in that style (esp. *Pure Holocaust*). But if you look at this record on its own terms, it is quite excellent. Slow, "epic" songs with a more technical, death-metal feel dominate, and lyrics about the cold and whatever J.R.R. Tolkien topics about fighting noble orcs...There is nothing on here as great as "In the Heart of Winter," but many of the songs are reminiscent of that song or at least are trying to recapture the success thereof. Their guitarist (Demonaz) does not play on the record but has not left the band either, as he continues to write the lyrics: "Antarctica, the coldest place of all, its drama will unfold." I know it is tough for black metal to be catchy, but this does it, and without being cheesy. Not for fans of BEHERIT or *Transylvanian Hunger*, but one of the better metal (if not Black Metal) records to come out recently.

A-

YOUTH ENRAGE- Heyoca CDEP (625)

I didn't really enjoy this Japanese insane-o-core, which just had really nonsensical music and pointless tempo changes. The vocals are irritating, and it seems like they've never really heard music, much less p-rock, before. There is neither coherence nor organic feeling to this uninteresting cd. Also, it's like 9 minutes long, so you should track this down on vinyl if you are a fan of SPAZZtic, pointless thrash music with a distinct Japanese flavor. F

BREAD AND WATER/RUSSIAN SCHOOL OF BALLET split 7" (systemsuck records)

BREAD AND WATER are a band from Dallas that I have enjoyed since I first saw/heard them a year or so ago, and consistently have put out good eps and splits in the vein of ECONOCHRIST (but faster, and with girl vox...I'd also say that B&W has a more "dramatic" guitar sound and more distinguishable songs). This is no exception, and is a fine set of 3 songs, two with acoustic parts and girl shouting/singing, and one with male crusty parts that is powerful but generic.

RUSSIAN SCHOOL OF BALLET does five songs...they sound kinda like MK ULTRA, but not as fun. Where are the breakdowns, dudes?? Their side is kinda...ok, but pointless, like another band no one will remember in two years, and no classic songs contributed to future mix tapes. Oh well. I hear this band is Brazilian, by the way...that must explain why both bands have lyrics translated into Portuguese.

Overall, this record was a must for me because B&W holds a special place in my heart, but for the casual fan, listen to it first before purchasing. B-

ARTIMUS PYLE-"The Absence of Life" EP (Prank)

Hey, what if HIS HERO IS GONE was still around? A-

RECORD REVIEWS-

FUNERAL- "Cry of State Desperation" 7" (self-released?)

If you've heard DISCHARGE and liked it, buy this. For the rest of you, here's the review: sloppy, fast political hardcore with a member of TRAGEDY and DEATHREAT, simple riffs and simple choruses propelled by a rolling d-beat assault and strained vocals. This is more satisfying than the 12" record they put out last year, but all the elements remain: lyrics printed on the back of the sleeve, strict DISCHARGE structures, and of course no email address...ha. This sounds more like Cal and Co. than even DOOM did, plus they occasionally have solos! The best song is "Religious Victim," for what that's worth. You know by now if you need this or not. A

PAINDRIVER- "The Truth is All that Matters" 7" (Sound Pollution)

This is a reissue of a record originally put out in 1997, and I think this band has a discography cd on SOA records...anyways, this is political-ish thrash with a crusty feel, especially the album art. This actually has grown on me since I first heard it, but it really rubbed me the wrong way at first. I think the vocals and the sound quality were a little abrasive, but after several listens that wears off and a good record is left beneath. Fast drums, interesting singing, and catchy (if barely audible) guitar riffs propel through 9 songs of music that sounds like it could have come out today, instead of five years ago (what does that say about hardcore?)...Anyways...A-

REAL REGGAE- "Maze +THC Best" CD (625)

This is some crazy fucked up shit reminiscent of mid-period CRIPPLE BASTARDS, but Japanese. These guys also like to smoke pot (see album title) and play reggae (see band name), which is kind of gimmicky, but if you liked BAD BRAINS you know this can work. Vocalist really sounds like Giulio the Bastard and the music is that same indistinct blur of riffs that you forget two seconds later, but *really* fast. This band has definitely grown on me over a few listens to this, and I hope anyone who heard their stuff on that one ass-famous comp that Sound Pollution put out will pick this up. This is a good listen but you definitely won't be singing along. B+

TOTAL FURY- "Committed to the Core" 7" (Youth Attack)

This is an excellent follow-up to the already-classic *13 Songs* full-length, with 9 insanely short songs on this 45, almost all of which are very memorable. This is more like their live show, a blur of riffs, breakdowns, and finger-pointing mosh mayhem. The drill is: fast hardcore from Japan, reminiscent of TEEN IDLES, but with a modern thrash ethic. The songs are *really* short, and the lyrics are of questionable merit (they mainly consist of clichéd bits of wisdom or optimism), but this is a top-notch record from an even better band. Committed to the core! A-

FOUND MY DIRECTION- "Burn All White Flags" CD (625)

Bland, annoying youth crew from Australia, in the vein of SHUTDOWN. This band uses every cliché of this once-vibrant genre, and chokes on its

climbed up into the rafters of the stage and began crawling over an industrial fan (clearly evoking the plight of the proletariat by alluding to Charlie Chaplin's similar sequence in *Modern Times*). He returned in time to hit the chorus again and head-bang to his heart's content. A while later, John Goodman introduced them again and I was curious as to what other tricks they could have. But unlike almost every other band on Saturday Night Live, and although FNM has come to be regarded as something of a one-hit wonder, I was again floored by the performance of "From Out of Nowhere," and curious where the band found this lunatic to sing for them.

A while later, my friend Jeff insisted that I listen to FNM in his car, however I was thoroughly unimpressed by the album and maintained that "Epic" was a little goofy for my tastes to actually want to hear again. Sometime about a year later (January of '02), I for some reason started downloading FNM songs because I had been listening to FANTOMAS (Mike's new band) in my same friend's car. After a hard diet of 3 WAY CUM, this was a welcome listen and so when I came across a copy of *The Real Thing* used, I snatched that up right away. There are only a couple real problems with this album:

All the songs have the same *sound*, and although there is quite a bit of stylistic variety, this saccharine production requires excellent songwriting to succeed. Luckily FNM were up for the challenge.

There is a 10 minute or so section of the album (songs 9 and 10) that just sucks. There is an instrumental (duh. this sucks) and a cover of "War Pigs" by BLACK SABBATH. While I love that song, FNM really doesn't change anything, and they keep it in its way too long form. BLACK SABBATH wisely used this song as an album opener, because at the start of an album a listener has more patience. By the 10th song, however, this is just grating. Taken alone, it is a decent cover, though.

The strongest parts of the album come in the beginning, notably the devastating opener "From Out of Nowhere," which was rightfully a radio hit, and "Epic," which is fun no matter who you are. "Falling to Pieces" was a video and hit single as well, but it lacks the punch of some other songs. My favorite song is the 8 minute title track, which I think has the best vocal

performance on the album and sustains its length very well by having four or so strong parts that reverberate back onto each other. Unlike some of the radio hits, which are somewhat dated, "The Real Thing" holds together well and is not tainted by over-commerciality.

I think I should discuss some of the overlooked tracks, such as "Underwater Love," "The Morning After," and "Edge of the World." These songs are not quite ballads, but they definitely have a 'smooth,' girl-oriented feel to them, and are basically just great pop songs. If the album consisted solely of this straight-forward feel, it would not be very interesting, but the interspersing of these normal songs among the strangeness of the rest of the album helps flesh it out and was something FNM would ignore later in their career, leading to 'eclectic' but less accessible albums (which are worthy of purchasing esp. if you can find them used, which you probably can).

Another note might be that this album has terrible, stupid lyrics which should be ignored. The instrumentation is also weak, and I think their drummer plays with KORN also weak, and I think their drummer plays with KORN nowadays (read: he sucks). The bassist is decent, and the keyboards are a nice touch, but nothing too special. How this band put out two albums without Mike Patton I will never understand. Mike Patton without a doubt makes this album the success it is, and if you are gonna get into late 80s mainstream rock, this album or the first DANZIG record would be the best places to start.



logo or idea in alliance with culture. I feel we as people are infinitely curious of nature but will never really explain it, it is too immense and unfathomable so instead we carry around presumptuous explanations and labels for ourselves as if they were on ready-made cue cards. I think the punk scene is too cocky and totally unaware that in reality it knows nothing, its whole foundation seems to exist to play off the status quo but it remains merely on these surface levels of rebellion. Rebellion for its own sake. it's more of a protective guise to latch onto. I'm way more interested in the individual, not the group or scene. I love talking about sex, I always love to hear people's stories and opinions, but setting up parameters and definitions is where I get nervous. Yet talk's about the only thing I feel I can offer anyone, just dialogue about all these issues. So many people want to be told that "You are this, and this is the way these people are." That's such bullshit, what about just opening your eyes?

Maybe my views on sex are totally fucked up but they are at least real...because they are unanswerable. Everything I think I know about it, I go back on. Solutions and answers just hang above me, dangling on fishing lines just out of reach. That's a really humbling thought.

11. What are you listening to right now? (Please don't say Jazz).

Lots of Beherit.

12. Any final comments?

Keith Richards deserves all the credit.

THE OATH have a 7" and a 9" out on **Coalition Records**. **Mark McCoy** runs **Youth Attack Records** and sang for **CHARLES BRONSON** and **HOLY MOLAR**, and was in **SOCIAL COMA**. Thanks again to Mark for doing this interview.

-Ben.

RAVAGING THROUGH

DARK CRYPTS:

EXTREME METAL

Metal. Your jock cousin listens to it, rednecks listen to it, you flirted with the idea of listening to it in 8th grade...and yet, there's that one kid with the SLAYER patch that is slightly intriguing...and it is fast music. So what's the deal?

One thing about metal is that it is initially intimidating due to the nature of its fans. Especially from a punk perspective, metalheads are usually apolitical (at best), stupid hicks with bad haircuts. Violent, retarded, usually homophobic and sexist, metalheads are not the sort of people a typical punker wants to be associated with. I've likened being into metal with the musical obsession of punk rock, but without ANY of the cool non-musical aspects of punk. There is much less DIY in metal, and the "underground" often seems to be just a phase in a band's graduation to a larger label. This is disappointing, because they have a lot of good music on their hands. Metal, of course, has had a two-decade long flirtation with punk:

Evidently in the mid to late 80s, metalheads recognized the speed and aggression of punk and started ruining shows with their brand of headbanging and violent moshing and drinking. This "crossover" crowd led to an eponymous style of music which instantly blew its potential after a few bonds. Notable among this blended form were spectacular bands like D.R.I., SAMHAIN, NAUSEA, and CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER. Unfortunately, crossover was followed by the atrocity that is "metalcore" (EARTH CRISIS, CONVERGE, SICK OF IT ALL, etc.). So, punk and metal have only occasionally mixed with success, but there has always been a tension towards harnessing the power inherent to each.

When it comes to individual tastes, metal is also organized slightly differently than punk: while a given session may like one or two bands like EMPEROR or CARCASS, the same kid may be woy into METALLICA, PANTERA, and HELLOWEEN. I see metal as drawn along more of a spectrum, while punk is more definitely drawn into categories. So while you will need to search hard to find a punk who likes HIS HERO IS GONE and GREEN DAY, most metal kids will like MEGADETH or SEPULTURA alongside more extreme bands. This extreme metal is really the only interesting stuff to me, mainly in the grind, death, and black genres.

Grind is really the only one that comes in contact with punk. However, one should really not interact with metal along the lines of "let's see what is punk about this music." The brutality of metal needs to be encountered on its own terms, rather than from a perspective of "I like fast music and hoarse vocals, maybe I'll like this." Instead, metal defines its own context, much the same way punk did the first time you heard it: no matter what you were into when you first heard your first punk music,

question of identity as central to the Oath. How do you see the evolution of identity, especially when a lot of kids think they are full-formed at the age of 18?

With Bronson, I was fearful of age, I hated the thought of the future, now I embrace it, and I try to step outside of my own confines and broaden myself...whatever that means. I knew at twenty that I would know nothing more at twenty six. So in many ways I was right, age happens too quickly to absorb what you think you need, instead you just feel days out and take it as it comes, blindly.

8. What is the spoken word 7"? gonna be like, and do you have any other projects on the table right now?

It'll be good and stupid, a guaranteed one listen. I spoke the whole thing in Czech. But I don't want to give it away because Nate's afraid of having to get rid of a thousand of the things as it is.

9. Bolt Thrower or Carcass?

Fucking Carcass! but only the first two...however the second Bolt Thrower rips. Monster x was a Bolt Thrower rip off, did you know that? I wonder if people realize that.

10. The art in the now-infamous insert, I'm assuming it to be all your own art. When I was at PS1 in New York, I saw this exhibit called 'the short century' featuring works by Ghada Amer, an Egyptian artist, that I found highly reminiscent of the booklet art. Not to be a big dork, but what is your art all about, and am I way off with this Ghada Amer thing? I like to imagine that it relates to issues of repressed sexual identity as well as having a shock value that is rare in these days and esp. in the desensitized p-scene. Discuss.

Yeah I did all those images. Much of my work revolves around reversing sexual expectations and gender roles and questioning the placement of sexual identity as a

lot of ideas but it's really hard to make the time to see them through. That's unfortunate, but at the same time I cherish it for what it is. I think when we're done I'll be more than satisfied with the oath.

6. What's the deal with the other bands you've been in since xCBx disbanded? Can you give a synopsis of what Holy Molar, Nazi Skinz, and Virgin MegaWhore are all about?

I just wanted to do different projects with my friends...HM was just guys from San Diego and one from Portland where we knew something good would come out of it considering the abilities of all the people involved. I really think those guys are great music makers....but like The Oath we were always really pressed for time. We were supposed to do a few shows and then the guitarist's sister died and it was really awful so we never played. VMW is my friend Jeff (ed: *Jeff Jelen*, also of *the Youth Attack CHARLES BRONSON* record), who I think is the best songwriter since Lou Reed. Jeff can do everything almost effortlessly...and the Nazi Skinz, well, I didn't play in that band, I just put out their record, but they were genius on so many levels. It was perfectly calculated indifference. They started the thing with the full intention of only doing six songs, five shows, and a record nobody would ever find. It was like a super-condensed version of the over-indulgent lifespans of most bad bands who ignore the call to die way past their expiration dates. Nazi Skinz were all about undercutting expectations, and after seeing their record review, I see they achieved exactly what they set out to do. Bands like them are the future. No time for posturing, for building cheeseball egos, just making an impact and getting the fuck out.

7. It is evident from a quick perusal of the Oath lyrics, and something not really present in Charles Bronson, that you have an awareness about the process of aging and redefinition of values with time. This is actually pretty moving. Along with the idea of repression and self-imposed inaction, I see this

you knew it was something different entirely from anything else, that didn't need connection or comparison to whatever else you had ever heard...Metal is similar, but since this is a p-zine, I must caution my readers to avoid listening to metal as if it were punk music. Take it as it presents itself: organically, and derived from pure hatred--it is its own destructive entity.

Of the various styles of metal, grindcore, death, and black ore the only really motivating ones to me. The other extreme style is "doom" metal, which to me is just boring. "Thrash" metal is even less interesting. I'll just rattle off some bands that I think really define these styles, and maybe a little about each.

Grindcore: NASUM-tight as fuck Swedish grind with two vocalists (one hi, one low) and very metallic, blurred riffs that shatter the song structures into shards of painful orol carnage; ASSUCK-extremely depressing political grind with low, rhythmic vocals, moshable breakdowns, plenty of guitar squeals, and the best lyrics ever; NAPALM DEATH-formative of the style, combining typical "metal" parts with radical blurs of blast beat noise and burping; SWALLOWING SHIT-legendary political grind choos with more hooks than Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Death: mid-period CARCASS-gore lyrics uttered in abdominal belches set to blast beats and guitars that sound like bricks crunching through someone's vertebrae; AT THE GATES-hook filled melodic metal, verging on pop, and perfectly capturing the New Wave of Swedish Death Metal (singer of THE CROWN, DISFEAR, LOCKUP, and SKITSYSTEM); SUFFOCATION-schizophrenic riffs thrown at 1000mph against blast beats and burp vocals- this is the music

you think of when you think of "metal" metal; BOLT THROWER- war-obsessed death metal with a heavy grind influence, devastated vocals, and an undending rain of double-bass drumming across apocalyptic landscapes.



Black: IMMORTAL-insanely fast, yet beautiful torrents of noise with gnome vocals and guitars that occasionally spawn the most emotional riffs: complete lack of syntax or warmth in the lyrics; ANTAEUS-grinding raw Satanic purity of form, blazing simple drums and alternating rasp/grunt vocals with plenty of breakdown-like parts...organs are for church; DARKTHRONE-the most raw, bitter hatred: underproduced, spiteful, and tarmenning; EMPEROR-seriously chaotic and majestic technical metal campased especially for the evil characters of Lord of the Rings.

The best internet resource for metal is anus.cam, which I cannot recommend highly enough, both for its entertaining style and the intense value of its content. I also advise CELTIC FROST and BATHORY as intraductions to extreme metal in general.-- Ben.

"separate," I don't know what you mean. What should I do? get it back together? Start another band just like it? That sounds like a nightmare!

4. The new 9/10" certainly had a problematic reception, what with the Ebullition controversy and a perceived "attitude" or arrogance that seems to have unsettled a lot of the 'kids.' I would postulate that the lack of "typical" hardcore topics in the lyrics, as well as the insert, are a) part of a larger point or motivation behind the band, and b) not really acceptable to the p-kids at the moment. Whereas a band like Limp Wrist is allowed to break down barriers to raise awareness about hypocrisy in the scene, it seems the reaction to the Oath is very hypocritical and contradictory, as people ask what the punk is going to mean and do they want it to include ALL viewpoints. If there is a question in here, please answer it.

Did Limp Wrist really change anything? To me it's a prepackaged problem and solution all in itself, like most hardcore records in the last ten years. Who're they saving? It's no test of the real world, it's limited and confining. I think those lyrics are just a celebration of being gay and proud, that's fine with me but it's a topic I couldn't see being interesting for very long. I say this because I knew people would eat that shit up immediately, and the band's good at what they do, but it's an idea that's gimmicky and lacks resonance.

5. What do you think is left to be accomplished with this band? Do you see an evolution of sound the way Charles Bronson did, or is The Oath going to be ONE sound and then you will form something else for another sound?


What does any band set out to accomplish? I have no idea. You just exist for a desired amount of time and break up when it feels right....realistically we'll never probably develop into what we could've been but I think what we have to show for now has its charms. We have a

2. A lot of scoobs always try to compare the Oath or Charles Bronson to bands from the 80s, implying a "retro" aspect that is present in so many bands (Ruination, Tear it Up) but I am not so certain that retro is on your mind. What is the value of regression and repetition that you see in the scene, versus the possibility of progress?

It's a paradox because I have gotten to the point that most of the hardcore listen is what made me love it in the beginning: shit I've had since junior high. I try to think about those old bands' approaches, and I try and tap into their mindsets...people have to realize now that back then that music was totally uncharted and more accepting than it is now, it was dangerous and had a point...for me it's a foundation. But that shit isn't going to happen again; I don't even want to try. Instead you just take a slight detour and go another direction. There are too many other influences worth seeking out to stay eternally buried in the past. But to me that music still defines me, it's not going anywhere.

3. The Oath lyrics on the first 7", especially "a carefully thought out bad idea" and "colostomy grab bag" are dealing with your relation to the scene through the lens of your success in Charles Bronson. What is your view of the legacy towards that band? You seem to be trying to separate from something that meant a lot to a lot of people.

I loved Charles Bronson, but for the most part I really am unaware to any kind of "legacy" it had, and I want to keep it that way. Sometimes people will ask me about it or tell me what it meant to them and it always comes as a shock that this long after the fact anyone would still care. But it really pleases me, I mean when I saw some guy standing next to Ozzy Osbourne on mtv wearing a CB shirt in plain view for ten seconds and I was freaking out. But really, there's no way that we could've functioned any more longer than we did, it lived it's proper lifespan, I respect it in its grave. Why go backwards? When you say



1. There seems to be a dichotomy in the identity of the Oath, with the noise/art influence combating with a youth crew/sXe style of breakdowns. Do you feel that you are doing something particularly innovative in this style, and what are you going for in this aesthetic?

I don't think we're innovative, but I would like to assume that I should be the last one to answer this. I never looked at what we were doing and sat back wondering where exactly it all fits into the course of music history. That's not my job! If anything, I think our influence has been an adverse one because we never actually came out and took a stance on any discernable viewpoints. That pisses people off, which is really the funny thing: you'd think people get into hardcore because they're sick of being told what to do or how to react, but when they see something without slogans or easy sing-along lyrics, they resent the challenge. So while people may think we're being coy or pretentious, speaking for myself, it's only my duty to present loose ideas, not to inflict more fucking parroted lines, not pledge any self-assured allegiance to any group, and to stay the fuck off message boards. I mean, who the fuck am I? Maybe it's because we're older and have grown closer as friends beyond music where we got to the point when to we started to think why certain things didn't affect us anymore, and it's

because everything what were involved in was just a social scene where creativity, on a grand scale, came second to everything else. It seemed to us all these people with so called authority in the scene were just jerks totally self absorbed, abusing their popularity and living in some safe ass bubble where they and all their friends conveniently have every idea worked out, every question answered where everything's very respectable and pissed off at the right people and so on...it's all so fucking boring for me, it's so easy to fake this shit when you know everyone loves the idealized version of yourself you portray. I prefer to enjoy the world and see past the stale version of hardcore today. Many of the people I know from it are great, but its rate of progress as an outlet for expression for me is sluggish, predictable, and redundant.

Basically to stay in hardcore this long means bending to the current modus operandi, where getting the right reactions is totally easy when all you have to do is you maintain this level of sameness and buy into the acceptance of going with the flow of things. It's no different than anything else. Punk really isn't that important, it falls right in line with reality. It's just an attachment people cling to. How about not having any answers? Instead we cling to reasons to feel reassured and confident. There's harm in that, when you're young it's more understandable...but I think people should be alone for great periods of time to have distance from their lives. Why be so defensive about beliefs? It's always too premature, it's the fault everyone seems to take of finding a voice too soon without any life experience to back it up. I know that I really know nothing of myself or of the world, I just have these hunches from a few years experience, so I constantly rewrite my beliefs in subtle forms every day. Hardcore is the opposite of this way of thinking: instead it inevitably locks you into a set grid. So one minute you got styles that in the next are gone, you got skateboarding skeletons and suddenly everyone's skating and singing about skating like its the newest thing

in the world. What's the use? For me it's a joke and about as interesting as singing about sportscars and lifting weights. It's a fucking boy's club that forty years ago would've been stamp collecting. I don't need that fake nostalgic attachments to stay in touch with my youth, it's bogus and uninteresting to me. I don't need to keep hearing more fast bands rewriting each other's lyrics. Who needs another rehash? Of course these things will always exist, but why care? Why even make it? for the kids getting into it now? Please. By saying that, it's like admitting to doing this as a favor. Kids aren't stupid, they know what to look for, is it really so cool to try and redo something again and again?

In the beginning, the original idea for us was just to write songs because we could and were friends all visiting each other from far away places, so it was like capturing a moment. Then we proposed all these ideas to one another that at first all sounded like jokes, like "let's actually put this out on vinyl, and then let's go on tour!" These were all very far fetched ideas at one point. The circumstances seemed timing and impractical but instead of tossing around pipedreams forever we actually set these goals and stuck to them. The more we talked about doing it, the more surprised we actually became at how easy it is to throw together a couple of riffs and create this documented record. You know like when you go somewhere out of the ordinary and you hear the same music repeatedly and then months later you'll hear it again unexpectedly and you're taken right back to that time. That's what it felt like. So it wasn't us trying to create something new, we were just into a certain record or band at a certain time, and so hearing that first ep now makes me recall it all. It really was intended only for us, that was it. I think the spontaneity made it feel really alive, it made me love my friends even more. Then afterwards things sort of took off.